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NSC FOR MGA VIN, LETIM  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN  
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [SOCI](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: NO FINAL VOTER REGISTRATION PLAN OR BUDGET, NO SPECIAL  
PROVISIONS FOR IDP VOTERS

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: On September 6, U.S. Agency for International Development Director and Pol Chief attended a National Elections Commission (NEC) Policy Committee meeting. NEC officials were unable to provide a budget covering activities through the post election period, operational plan or voter registration plan. Election advisors are concerned about provision of voter registration materials in time to begin registration on November 1 as specified in the national election timeline. The NEC remains unwilling to develop special provisions for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) voters. END SUMMARY

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Voter Registration Preparation Lacking  
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12. (SBU) Voter registration is scheduled to begin on November 1 as specified in the national election timeline. According to the NEC, it discarded the registration plan developed by international election advisors and NEC experts and developed a new plan. According to election advisors, it will not be possible to complete registration on time under the new plan due to insufficient human and logistical resources. Election advisors said that they recently worked with the NEC to make the plan more feasible. NEC and election advisors agreed for budget and planning purposes to set a registration target of 16.5 million or 80 percent of eligible voters according to the census. NEC officials acknowledged that an officially endorsed final voter registration plan is not yet available.

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NEC Budget Raises Questions  
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13. (SBU) The current draft NEC budget provided at the meeting totals approximately \$200,000,000, but has not been officially endorsed or approved by the NEC. NEC officials announced that the Government of National Unity (GNU) has committed funding through June 2010, though it did not specify the amount committed. In addition, the NEC announced that GNU contributions to the budget are set at 42 percent and donor contributions at 58 percent. Election advisors said after the meeting that this breakdown does not match the most recent budget developed by the advisors and NEC experts. That budget evenly divides costs between the GNU and donors according to election advisors.

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IDPs Need Voter Education To Participate  
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14. (SBU) Donors raised concerns about the ability of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to register and to vote. The 2008 National Election Act does not lay out specific registration and polling procedures for IDPs; the same eligibility criteria apply to all

Sudanese, including IDPs, according to the NEC. NEC officials and donor country representatives agreed that targeted and focused voter education in IDP camps is critical to ensure that IDPs know the procedures and are encouraged to participate in the process. Great Britain's e Department for International Development (DfID) Country Director Sandra Pepera emphasized the need for flexibility to allow extra time for IDP registration in the event that large numbers of IDPs are able to return to their homes after registration but prior to the national elections.

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NEC Queried on Executive-Only Elections  
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15. (SBU) Embassy of the Netherlands Ambassador Norbert Braakhuis asked about speculations concerning executive-only elections. According to Ambassador Braakhuis, both the SPLM and the NCP have raised the idea of executive-only elections in discussions with the UK. Neither NEC nor GNU representatives commented.

16. (SBU) COMMENT: With voter registration scheduled to begin in less than two months, the NEC has yet to finalize its registration plan, and has not begun training registration staff or conducting voter education concerning registration. IDP voter registration and polling will pose challenges for the millions of Sudanese who do not live close to their home areas. The ongoing delay in finalization of the operational plan and budget, combined with an ad hoc approach to electoral planning by the NEC, increases the likelihood that there will not be sufficient time to procure materials and prepare for voter registration, voter education, and polling. END COMMENT

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